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# Iowa WIC Vendor Newsletter

## FIS PLANNED OUTAGE FOR STAND BESIDES

On October 2nd and October 23rd your eWIC system may be down for 15-20 minutes while they run an update. This is a planned outage and during this time you will be unable to process WIC transactions.

We do not have specifics on who will be impacted at what time, but if you have questions, you can call the FIS help desk at 1-844-234-4949.



## WIC STATE OFFICE IMPORTANT DATES

With the upcoming holiday season, we have some dates our offices will be closed.

On November 24th and 25th, December 26th, and January 2nd, there will be no WIC staff available for assistance.

We will be encouraging participants to shop prior to those dates. If you do encounter a problem while the office is closed, please reach out to the contacts listed on page 3 under the "Common Transaction Q&A" section.



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## NEW FEATURE ON THE WIC SHOPPER APP

In early August the WIC Shopper App got a new feature– an electronic version of our food flyer!

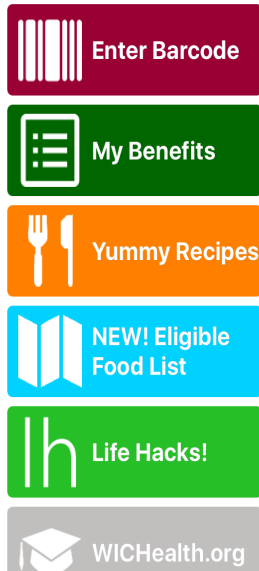
The App is free and available on Apple and Android devices. Search “WIC Shopper” in the App Store/Google Play Store and look for this logo:



If you do not have a smart phone, you can use this link to view an online version:

<http://www.ebtshopper.com/wic-eligible-foods/iowa-food-guide/>

REMEMBER!! Vendors can use the App too! You do not have to be a cardholder to use the App.



Select the blue “NEW! Eligible Food List” option from the main menu (shown above)

(Left middle) There is a menu within the Food List to navigate through the different food categories. You can either click the drop down arrow, or scroll to the category you want.

(far left) Each category has its own section that is laid out like the print food flyer. Green text indicates what is acceptable to ‘Buy’ while pink/red text covers ‘Do not buy’



### NEW! Eligible Food List

#### Fresh Fruits and Vegetables



##### Buy:

- Any variety of fresh, whole, or cut fruits or vegetables
- Bagged salad mixes
- Bagged fruits or vegetables

##### Do not buy:

- Fruits or vegetables with added ingredients
- Dressings or dips
- Herbs or spices
- Dried, canned, or jarred fruits or vegetables
- Salad bar items



#### Frozen Fruits and Vegetables

##### Buy:

- Any variety of whole, cut, or mixed
- Frozen beans such as lima beans, edamame, or black-eyed peas
- Fruit packaged in juice or water

*Have a question or comment about eWIC? Send it our way!*  
[IowaWIC@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:IowaWIC@idph.iowa.gov)

## TRANSACTION/REDEMPTION PROCESS

Overview	When handling WIC food instruments, there are federal and state regulations that every vendor must follow. These regulations are outlined below. Each time a vendor accepts a WIC food instrument, the vendor certifies that the program regulations were followed in that transaction. Any vendor that accepts WIC food instruments in accordance with the program regulations is guaranteed payment. Failure to adhere to these regulations could result in a vendor's suspension from the participation in this program. The WIC vendor's cooperation is essential to the WIC Program. It is the vendor's responsibility to ensure that this information is clearly understood by all store associates who will be involved in WIC transactions.
Redemption in Iowa only	Iowa WIC food instruments may be redeemed at any Iowa authorized WIC vendor. Grocery vendors may redeem food instruments for food and formula. Special purpose vendors may only redeem food instruments for formula.
WIC Participant Education	Before receiving his/her food instruments, each WIC participant received detailed instructions on how to use the food instruments. In addition, WIC participants are advised to inform vendors at the checkout counter that they are using WIC food instruments. Most WIC participants should have no problem using their food instruments. However, on occasion it may be necessary for store associates to assist some participants in completing their food instruments correctly.
Identification	Individuals using the eWIC card will be using a Personal Identification Number (PIN) at checkout. No other identification may be required of a WIC participant.
What can be purchased	Only the food items and quantities on the eWIC card may be purchased. WIC participants must receive the food item that corresponds specifically to the UPC code scanned by the vendor during the transaction. A participant cannot buy more than the total quantity of food on their eWIC card and that appears on their eWIC receipt. Where brand names are specific, only those brands can be purchased. A Cash Value Benefit (CVB) is issued to some WIC participants for the purchase of fruits and vegetables. The WIC participant may purchase fresh and/or frozen fruits and vegetables meeting WIC guidelines. The dollar value or the CVBs varies based on the value of benefits the participant is authorized to receive. WIC participants are permitted to use vendor and manufacturers coupons and buy-one-get-one promotions to purchase WIC foods. Vendors are allowed to use incentive items that are: Merchandise obtained at no cost to the vendor and provided to participants without charge, Food of \$1.99 or less and merchandise of nominal value, Food sales or specials which involve no cost or only a nominal value for the vendor regarding the food items involved, and Do not result in a charge to a WIC food instrument for foods in excess of the foods that were issued. The credit due from any promotion is to be deducted from the WIC purchase.
Nominal Value	Nominal value is defined as value equal to or less than \$1.99.
Not allowed substitutions	Vendor shall not allow substitutions, cash, credit, refunds, or exchanges.
New Products	Contact the State WIC office to discuss the process on adding new products (UPC's) that may be WIC eligible.
First & Last Valid Day of Use	Participant benefits will start on the first of each month and end the last day of each month. Any transactions occurring on the last day of the month must be complete by midnight (Central Standard Time-CST)
Vendor Identification	The vendor identification is programmed for each individual store and resides within the Point of Sale (POS) system.
Completing eWIC transactions	<b>Stand Beside eWIC Transactions:</b> Follow the instructions found in the Point of Sale (POS) manual. <b>Integrated eWIC Transactions:</b> The POS system will confirm that the foods purchased are WIC eligible <b>Stand Beside and Integrated eWIC Transactions:</b> The following steps occur for both stand beside and integrated eWIC transactions: Participants enter their PIN. Vendors shall not request the participant's PIN, nor should they enter the PIN for them. The transaction is conducted. For Cash Value Benefits (CVB's), accept alternative forms of payment if the value of the transaction exceeds the value of the CVB. Do not provide cash back or credit (IOU) to participants if the value of the transaction is less than the value of the CVB. Print the participant's eWIC receipt. Payment will be dependent on a benefit inquiry that the system: Validates the benefit month Validates benefits to be redeemed The Vendor is prohibited from scanning any UPC code that is not affixed to the actual item being purchased by the WIC participant, or any UPC code as a substitute, replacement, or otherwise not actually affixed to the actual item being purchased by the WIC participant. A vendor must accept an alternative form of payment in conjunction with a WIC CVB transaction only. Because a WIC food instrument is good only for the actual cost of the authorized foods, change or credit is never to be given to the participant following redemption of a WIC food instrument. Foods purchased with WIC food instruments are not to be returned for cash or credit toward other purchases. Print WIC on all WIC receipts to avoid any confusion. WIC food instruments can never be exchanged for cash.
Payment of food instruments	Transactions will be either processed through FIS Government Solutions or a Third Party Processor (TPP). Vendors will have a contract with either FIS or a TPP. The Department will not be a party of the lease agreement. A vendor will receive payment within 48 hours only if the food instrument is properly completed. A food instrument will not be honored by the state's bank if: The maximum amount allowed is exceeded, The transaction is manipulated, Is used by a State agency outside of Iowa The vendor has the responsibility to review the claims processing results that returns from the eWIC processor. If a food instrument has been rejected by the state's bank, call the Vendor IVR line that will be provided by the State WIC office.



### REMINDERS FOR VENDORS...

- ◇ Foods purchased with WIC benefits **cannot** be placed in food drive bins
- ◇ You should **never** ask a participant to write down their card number or PIN
- ◇ **Never** let a participant leave the store with product if the transaction did not go through
- ◇ Checks are gone! There should be no more WIC checks in circulation.
- ◇ If a participant was able to get an item on checks, but now cannot get it with the card, fill out a UPC submission form. **DO NOT** do any exchanges or trades.





## MINIMUM STOCKING REQUIREMENTS

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!** Since the switch to WIC cards, we have noticed that a large number of WIC transactions are taking place in the first week of the month. In August, nearly 40% of all WIC sales were taking place the 1st-7th. This may be something you want to take into consideration when stocking.

Please take a moment to review the minimum stocking requirements for being a WIC Vendor. You **MUST** have the minimum quantity available for sale to participants at all times.

Item	Minimum Quantity
Cereal Cold, ready-to-eat cereals Hot Cereal	10 boxes- Two (2) boxes of (5) approved varieties- of the five (5) approved varieties, three (3) varieties must be whole grain.
100% Whole Wheat Bread	Four (4) 16 ounce loaves approved 100% whole wheat bread.
Brown Rice	Two (2) 14-16 ounce containers instant/Boil in Bag approved brown rice
Juice 64 ounce shelf stable 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice 12 ounce concentrated 100 percent fruit juice. Single flavor only.	Fifteen (15) 64-ounce containers of at least three (3) approved varieties.  Ten (10) 12-ounces containers of at least two (2) approved varieties.
Dairy Products Whole Vitamin A and D fortified fluid milk Low-fat or fat-free fluid, Vitamin A and D fortified milk Approved varieties of cheese	4 gallons whole milk  4 gallons low-fat or fat-free milk  2 pounds of 2 different varieties weighing 8 or 16 ounces each
Edible dried beans or peas	Two (2) 1-pound bags, any variety
Peanut Butter	2 approved containers 18-ounce size or less, of 100 percent peanut butter
Eggs (Grade A)	5 dozen large fresh eggs, white or brown
Fish	8 containers of tuna, 5-ounce minimum size 8 containers of salmon, 5-ounce minimum size
Formula	Twenty-Four (24) 13-ounce cans of any current rebate contract concentrated formula, or 6 cans of any current rebate contract powdered formula
Infant Cereal	Twenty-Four (24) ounces of at least two (2) varieties of WIC approved dry infant cereal (infant cereal with at least 45% of the daily value for Iron per serving)
Baby Food (Fruits and Vegetables)	Fifty (50) 4-ounce containers of at least five (5) approved varieties (single ingredient or blends)
Baby Meats	Ten (10) 2.5-ounce containers of single ingredient meats of at least 2 approved varieties (single ingredient)
Fruits and Vegetables	Ten (10) varieties of fresh fruits and vegetables each Two (2) varieties of frozen fruits and vegetables each
<b>Note:</b> The variety and quantity in stock are defined as including both inventory on display and on-premises storage, but not inventory on order from suppliers.	



### What is an 'outdated APL'?

-An APL (approved products list) file that is dated older than the previous calendar day

### What causes an outdated APL?

-You system may not be programmed to download the new APL nightly

-If you shut your machine off at night, the file will not download (stand besides only)

### Symptoms?

-There are a lot of items that should be WIC that do not scan as WIC approved

-A participant has told you he/she was able to get it at another store, but cannot purchase it at your store

-It shows up on the WIC Shopper App as approved, but does not scan at the register

### Solutions?

-If you believe you may have an outdated APL file, contact your Point of Sale provider (FIS, RDS, North Country, Spartan Nash, etc.) or your corporate office

-Ask them to verify that the APL in your system is up to date

-Make sure your system is set up to automatically download the APL

-Be sure to leave the stand beside device ON overnight

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(1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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